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AVERROES TODAY

Fundamentalism and Secularization
in The Middle East

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*No one should be definitely
called an unbeliever for violating
unanimity on a point of interpretation*
Ibn Rushd

*Sapere aude!
"Have courage to exercise your
own understanding."*
Kant

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Editorial

In 1976 I was invited by Harvard University to dialogue with professors of philosophy , politics, and religion. One of these dialogues was with Herbert Kelman, professor of social ethics. During the dialogue, he asked me about how to solve the Arab-Israeli conflict. My answer was: secularization is the solution. He was completely astonished, and his comment was: this is the first time I hear about such solution.

Then came the year 1979, which was a decisive triumph for the fundamentalisms in all religions. Such triumph was due to the following tragic events :

- the fundamentalist Iranian revolution led by Ayatollah Khomeini.
- the foundation of Christian fundamentalism under the name "Moral Majority" headed by Rev. Jerry Falwell, and another related movement called "Religious Round Table", organized by Ed McAteer.[1]

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(1) R. Viguerie, The New Right, Introduction by J. Falwell, The Viguerie Company, U.S.A. 1981.



President Sadat and Dr.Falwell enjoying a moment of levity during serious discussions on the Middle East situation



Falwell accepts the opportunity to discuss his views on the state of Israel with Prime Minister Begin.

- the decision made by Jimmy Carter, then US President, to support the Islamic fundamentalists in Afghanistan against the Soviet Union.
- the Egyptian-Israeli Peace Treaty signed by Prime Minister Menachem Begin and President Anwar Sadat. The first was a fundamentalist Jew and the second supported the Egyptian fundamentalists in order to get rid of the leftists in Egypt. Both accepted Jerry Falwell as the unofficial spokesman for a large segment of the American people. Falwell was on amical terms with both leaders and considered them to be his personal friends. "The Middle East is of extreme importance to the Moral Majority," was his famous dictum.(2)

In 1988, two significant incidents took place: first, the "Fundamentalist Project" launched by the American Academy of Arts and Sciences to study the historical and ideological roots of various movements of fundamentalisms in all religions and to view synoptically the traits attributed to these movements. The result of this massive study was five volumes.

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(2) Patricia Pingry, Jerry Falwell : Man of Vision, Ideals Publication, p. 70.

Second, in the year 1986, I presented a proposal to the Steering Committee of the International Federation of Philosophical Societies (**FISP**), (I was then President of the Afro-Asian Philosophy Association (**AAPA**)), to organize a seminar on "Fundamentalism and Secularization in the Middle East", to be held during the XVIII World Congress at Brighton (UK) in August, 1988. The proposal was approved, and the seminar was held on 26 August, 1988.

The reason behind the formulation of that proposal was my conviction that we live in fundamentalist age which has emerged early in the a twentieth century and has spread all over the globe shaping our ways of self-understanding.

Today we are publishing the seminar papers to prove that, ten years after the presentation of these views, the topic is still valid and merits more and deeper understanding.

Finally, I wish to acknowledge the support and contribution of the International Humanist and Ethical Union in the production of this issue.

Mourad Wahba

Preface

This is the second issue of ***Averroes Today***, published by Ibn Rushd and Enlightenment International Association. The entire issue is devoted to one specific topic, namely, Fundamentalism and Secularization in the Middle East, which is also the title of the Seminar held at the XVIII World Congress of Philosophy of the International Federation of Philosophical Societies (**FISP**), at Brighton (UK) in 1988.

Although the topic of fundamentalism and secularization is a global issue that concerns all cultures and all societies at the close of the twentieth century, it is of specific importance to the Middle East as it constitutes the core of the Arab-Israeli conflict and, hence, represents the real threat to peace. The papers published here, which were originally presented at the Seminar, are philosophical attempts to delve deeper into the Arab mind and culture to locate the roots of the phenomenon of Islamic fundamentalism. The authors represent a wide spectrum of Arab and Muslim intellectuals: Abdel-Razik Guessoum from Algiers, Mohamed Haq Algarih from India, Adel Daher from Jordan, Hamid Algar from Iran, and the editors of this issue from

Egypt. Their views and interpretations of the issue of fundamentalism and secularization in the Middle East represent one integral whole, despite their diversity, and shed new light on the phenomenon that goes beyond the political and economic reasons which are usually offered by sociologists as an explanation of this global phenomenon. The authors here prove that Islamic fundamentalism is not merely a political movement, as many analysts claim, but is a much deeper cultural phenomenon that distinguishes the Arab-Islamic mind.

The escalation of global terrorism, spearheaded by religious fundamentalist groups, testifies to the urgent need for a secular movement to counterbalance this phenomenon. The facts of every day terrorism in the Middle East are a continuous reminder of this need. They are also an ever-renewed proof that the terror of fundamentalisms can neither be met by arms nor by security, but by the power of reason, that is, by philosophy.

Mona Abousenna

Massage from the Director General of *UNESCO*

to the Second Special International Conference of Averroes & Enlightenment International Association

"Creativity and Pax Mundi"

held in Cairo (11- 15 December 1996)

On behalf of **UNESCO,** I welcome the opportunity to address a message to this international gathering, assembled to debate a topic of the highest importance for our common future.

The invention of nuclear weapons, Jaspers once said, placed humanity for the first time in possession of its own death. During fifty years of Cold War confrontation, the United Nations system played a key role in averting the irreparable. But while the apocalypse never happened, the culture of violence has endured and in recent times has erupted in new and pernicious forms as wars between states have tended to be replaced by conflicts as diverse as the forms assumed by the denial or assertion of human freedom, but are often fueled by the ideology of ethno-nationalism or religious extremism- are posing complex humanitarian and security problems at the close of the twentieth century.

Addressing the challenges and opportunities of the post-Cold-War era will require a new commitment by the international community to the establishment of peace with justice. **UNESCO** believes that peace-building must be rooted in universal education, of the kind that it is pronoting with its **UN** patrners through its worldwide **Education** for **ALL Project**, by promoting the knowledge and skills necessary for self-reliant development and by fostering the attitudes of tolerance and solidarity on which peace is predictated. The sleep of reason, said Goya, creates monsters. Only through education can we hope to move from the logic of force to the force of reason, from an age-old culture of war to culture of peace.

"The art of creation is older than the art of killing", worte the poet Andre Voznesesnky. Is this not precisely the function of education - to nutrure a primordial creativity at the confluence of freedom and responsibility, to awaken the creative potential in every human being, to contribute to the condition of our living together in peace? **UNESCO,** which commends and supports your initiative, awaits with inrerest your reflections on the relationship between creativity and Pax Mundi.

Federico Mayor

Philosophical News

In **Cairo**, in December 1994, Averroes and Enlightenment International Association, an affiliate of the **AAPA**, organized its First Special International Conference on "Averroes and Enlightenment". The major papers presented at the conference, particularly Mourad Wahba's paper, tried to prove that Averroes could be considered a precursor of 18th century European Enlightenment.

In **Buffalo** (New York), in April 1995, the Centre for Free Inquiry organized an International Seminar on the theme: :Averroes and his Influence: Remembering G. Hourani". During the Seminar there was a heated discussion between Mourad Wahba and Charles Butterworth (the renowned American Orientalist)- with the intervention of Muhsin Mahdi who was the moderator of the session- in which Butterworth tried to falsify Wahba's ideas.

In 1996, *Alif,* the Journal of Comparative Poetics published by the American University in Cairo, produced a special issue under the title: "Averroes and the Rational Legacy in the East and the West" (No 16, 1996). The major articles in the issue tried to undermine Averroes' rationality, particularly Butterworth's article entitled "Averroes: Precursor of

the Enlightenment". The content of the article is a refutation of its title by claiming that there is no relation between Averroes and the Enlightenment. Along the line of Butterworth's article was the Editorial which attacked those who try to canonize Averroes by turning him into an international icon, or even by trying to appropriate him for a specific viewpoint.

Thus, one feels that the conflict that faced Averroes in the twelfth century is being repeated in the twentieth century, a paradox that has to be surpassed.

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In **Geneva**, in August 1998, the Second Parliament of Science, Religion and Philosophy was held under the auspices of the International Organization of the World Philsophers Meet' 98. The Conference theme was: *Science, Religion and Ethics in the Twenty-first Century*. The conference was held (14-19 August, 1998) under the chairmanship of prof. Karad who was recently appointed **UNESCO** Chair of Philosophy. Prof. Karad is also Director of MIT (Maharashtra Institute of Technology) in Pune, India.

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The Third Special International Conference of Averroes and Enlightenment International Association

was held in **Cairo** (7-11 December, 1998) on the theme: *Terrorism and Teaching Philosophy*. The theme was inspired by the guestionnaire launched by Federico Mayor, the Director General of **UNESCO**,.

The questionnaire was presented to the Egyptian Minister of Education, Dr. Hussein Kamel Bahaa-Eddin, who enthusiastically approved that the questionnaire be administered through the department responsible for the teaching of philosophy at the Ministry. The questionnaire was given to some candidates ranging from schoolteachers of philosophy, to university professors, theologians, engineers, medical doctors, students, school administrators, and ministry of education officials. The total number of questionnaire candidates was 400. The results were analysed by a committee of six university staff members from different departments at Ain-Shams University. At the Third Special International Conference on *Terrorism and Teaching Philosophy* held in Cairo (7-11 December, 1998) the results of the questionnaire were presented and discussed. In one of the next issues of **Averroes Today** we will publish some of the presentations made at the conference, including the full text of the quesionnaire.

Journalistic Review

In Al-Ahaly, a newspaper issued by Al-Tajjammu' Party, under the title *'Philosophers Challenging the World'*, Refaat Al-Said, the renowned political thinker wrote a series of three review articles on **Averroes Today**, issue No.1. The following is a translation of the full text.

No one should be definitely called an unbeliever for violating unanimity on a point of interpretation' is the journal's major slogan, Dr. Al-Said noted. The message addressed by the editors to the reading public, he added, is to raise some vital questions the ultimate end of which is to shed new light on Averroes' philosophical ideas as a springboard for a new dialogue between cultures in the light of the 21st century orientations (p. 1).

The issue includes fascinatingly simple and wonderful philosophical papers that try to permeate the Egyptian mind, with a view to pushing or urging it towards the enlightenment horizons.

In his paper, Dr. Mourad Wahba refers to a civilizational gap between the developed and the developing countries that can only be bridged through '*the sovereignty of reason and commitment of reason to change reality for the benefit of the masses*' (p. 3).

For him reason is '*the faculty of practico-transcendental interpretation*' (p. 6), a definition that implies a relationship between reason and revolution which is the radical change of reality. Dr. Wahba also adopts the idea of '*counterpoising the revolutionary interpretation of reality to the conservative interpretation*', and emphasizes the fact that '*without revolutionary reason there can be no revolutionary philosophy*' (p. 6). In the end Dr. Wahba raises a number of questions the most important of which is '*how can philosophy promote the Mass-Man* (the replacement of the new intelligentsia) *to be the future master of himself and his world?*' (p. 7)

This is the main issue. Thus, philosophy goes down from its ivory tower or, to be exact, prison to be, as Socrates put it, an urge, and a revolutionary tool in the hands of the Mass-Man to be used for the purpose of changing the world in which he lives, and to establish a world in which he is the master of himself and of the world itself.

In the same issue, Dr. Mona Abousenna presents a valuable article entitled '*Language as Culture*'. In this article she tries to find connection between the word as a phonetic representation and the idea. She also suggests that '*thought and language form a unity like body and mind*' or that '*a change in language can*

transform our appreciation of the cosmos' (p. 23). Dr. Mona rejects the treatment of language as something existing in a vacuum, as well.

In addition, Dr. Mona shows how '*Arab traditionalist society is inevitably tied up with the permanent and everlasting...rather than with the changing and transient, i.e. man.... Therefore, creativity and re-evaluation and innovation are deviations from the origins.* '(p. 36)

She further remarks that '*...change was regarded... as a kind of dissent and was given the derogatory name 'invention' (bid'a) to denote heresy.... Finally, any crea-tive trend was suppressed.*'(p. 36)

Reason and Action in Africa' is another article written by the African philosopher Odera Oruka. It is a talented and wise attempt to touch upon the wounds of the African body, and raises a number of painful questions. These are rather like well-targeted arrows.

One of the questions is concerned with enlightenment which was once equivalent to Marxism in the West and the East. '*Would the end of Marxism (if at all) mean the death of enlightenment in those regions?*' (p.16)

Odera, then, takes us to the painful African distress, referring to the '*African Republic of Inhumanity and Death*', which is a result of the absence of opposition (p.17). He also attacks severely the absence of democracy in Africa. '*The wiping out of any opposition resulted in a national self destruction....The reality is that truth and right are with the supreme political authority, and both* ***reason*** *and opposition are evil which must be kept nursing themselves in the intensive care units*' (p. 17).

Odera later speaks of the fact that '*One aspect of any nation, which is the real custodian of reason and enlightenment, is the academia*' (p.18). Nevertheless, these '*... are merely fearful subordinators standbys for the supreme political personality.*' (p.18)

'*If opposition and academia'*, Odera enquires bitterly, '*currently offer no hope for the Age of Reason in Africa, where else can we turn for hope?*' The answer is: '*May be, the masses and the women*' (p.18)

Thus, we are here dealing, from the very beginning, with philosophers challenging the world, aren't we? Socratic philosophers who break all the bars of Philosophy's ivory prison, the prison in which they have been put by reactionaries. They move now

towards the Mass-Man, calling for enlightenment, reason and democracy.

Back to Dr. Mona's paper, it focuses on the idea of 'creativity'. If thought is a fixed mechanism incapable of responding to an ever-changing world, full of infinite changes, creativity turns into 'bid'a' (inven-tion), and every bid'a is a deviation, and is thus doomed to hell.

The study pauses at a pivotal idea, namely, the perception that perfection has been obtained completely and exclusively in the past. This means that perfection is beyond and not before us, that is, it has been exclusively obtained in the past, not in the present or the future. '*Hence, it is no longer a problem of the old versus the new, but the question of the permanent origins which are everlastingly new and more perfect than any novel attempt.*' (p.41)

Bearing this statement in mind, we ponder over the claims of Islamizers (pseudo-Moslems, a term coined by Dr. R. El-Said to denote fundamentalists) who give us a picture of society as realized in the past, and claim that it can be restored as it is without any change, i.e., without any innovation or attempt to cope with new changes. This is the wrong conception of the so-called Islamic State that, we believe, no one, no

Koranic verse or Prophetic tradition spoke of. Nevertheless, they call for this state against us all in the hope that they may, via it, rule and control.

As a result, we remain captive to the past, having no hope of attaining progress, civilization or advancement.

The solution is not overlooking the past or negating it, but rather studying it as a part of human experience and knowledge, a guide; not a final and eternal solution.

Another important idea discussed by Dr. Mona is the idea that the Arab reason realizes work not as production, i.e. changing nature, but rather consuming nature.

Thus, we are always destined to remain consumers of technology, far from creativity, invention and development, as we refuse, in principle, the cultural values that give the mind freedom of thinking and creativity, and the innovator the right to trial and error.

This right can not be fruitful unless it is an original component of the mindset in all its aspects. The mindset, which is free from all limitations except the limitation of the mind itself, is alone, if prevailing and well established, capable of releasing creative

energies in all the fields of human knowledge. Without this, there is no hope of, or way to any progress or civilizational shift.

Due thanks remain to be given to the providers of this philosophically pleasant meal, Dr. Mourad Wahba and Dr. Mona Abousenna. They taught us that philosophy should get out of its ivory prison, and go down to the masses to serve them. Philosophy should turn into effective energy in enlightening society and ridding it of illusions and superstitions, imposing on all the power of reason.

Haven't we said from the beginning that they are philosophers challenging the world?*

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* Translated by Montasser Ek-Shourbagy.

Seminar
on

Fundamentalism and Secularzation
in
the Middle East

Organized by Afro-Asian Philosophy Association
(AAPA)

26 August, 1988 (Brighton, U.K.)
At the XVIII World Congress of the international

Federation of Philosophical Societies
(FISP)

Fondamentalisme et Sécularisme dans le Monde Musulman Aujourd'hui

Abdelrazzek Guessoum[(*)]

Introduction

Toute analyse objective des deux concepts proposées ici à l'étude (le fondamentalisme et le secularisme) autour des quels les intellectuels contemporains livrent aujourd'hui une bataille idéologique acharnée. nous renvoie necessairment à une étude plus globale et plus profonde de la realité socio-economique et ideo-culturelle du monde arabo-musulman.

Une telle analyse pour s'assurer de l'attente de ses objectifs doit à notre avis adopter comme méthode une approche à la fois historique, analytique et critique.

Beaucoup de données et d'enseignements aussi bien le fondamentalisme que le sécularisme et tant que concepts, traduisent la crise intellectuelle et idéologique que traverse le monde musulman aujourd'hui.

Il y a lieu de rappeler ici, que cette crise que

(*) Professor at the University of Algiers.

n'épargne aucune partie de la carte islamique de Djakarta à Tanger, rappelle expressement de nombreuses crises passées ayant marqué l'histoire politique, economique, sociale et culturelle de la société arabo-musulmane.

Loin de partager integralement la conviction de certains penseurs contemporains, selon laquelle la crise du monde musulman serait une crise de la pensée et pas simplement une crise de la société musulmane[(1)] , nous estimons que le monde arabo-musulman souffre de la maladie propre à lui, qui est , selon nous, une crise idéologique.

C'est de cette caratéristique qu'émanent les différentes formes de crises qui continuent à marquer l'évolution de l'homme arabe et musulman.

Qu'elle soit une crise de l'idéologie islamique traditionnelle (selon la qualification de A. Laroui), ou celle du liberalisme, ou du socialisme, ou de l' arabisme[(2)] , elle ne fait que reprendre les étapes

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1) Parmi ces penseurs, nous relevons, chez les penseurs arabes. Abdallah Laroui dans son livre *Islam et Modernité* (Ed. La Découverte, Paris 1987), et Olivier Carré et Paul Dumont chez les occidentaux, notamment dans leur livre *Radicalismes Islamiques* (Paris, 1985)

(2) A. Laroui, *Islam et Modernité*, pp. 82-83.

les plusmarquantes de l'histoire de la société musulmane moderne, traduisant la deception des couches sociales musulmanes, et leur desespoir devant les nombreux modes de systèmes pratiques dans le monde musulman.

L'alternative proposée et recherchée par les artisans du discours islamique contemporain, est bien le modèle islamique instauré par Dieu.

Si nous devions nous contenter de cette première face de notre conception nous pourriont déclarer que les mouvements islamiques, à quelques exceptions, adoptent comme mot d'ordre : "Etat islamique" ou "Révolution Islamique" ou encore "Souveraineté exclusive de Dieu"[3].

On peut déduire de ce premier jugement que le fondamentalisme en tant que doctrine ne peut pas combler un vide idéologique laissé par l'écroulement des structures traditionelles d'une part, et par l'échec des modèles importés de l'occident d'autre part.

Ainsi, nous déduisons, que nous sommes en face d'une problématique naissante de la comparaison de deux cultures voire deux civilisations engendrées par

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(3) Olivier Carré et Paul Dumont, *Radicalismes Islamiques*, T.I., p. 16.

la confrontation des concepts propres à chaque civilisation. Ainsi, sommes nous forcés de procéder a une analyse du fondamentalisme comme synonyme de l'authenticité , de l'originalité, du radicalisme, du ressourcement de la mobilisation à symbole religieux et surtout de l'affirmation de soi.

Le resultat de cette première constatation qu'il y aurait deux conceptions du fondamentalisme : la première, celle dont nous venons de citer les caractéristiques et qui est interne à la pensée islamique tend, à travers les differentes appelations intrinsèques , à affirmer l'identité de l'individu et de la société dans la nation musulmane, la UMMA ; la seconde est étrangère à notre pensée, elle constitue une école empruntée de l'occident par certains penseurs musulmans modernes dans le but d'appliquer ces méthode dans le monde musulman.

La definition donnée au fondamentalisme par cette école pro-occidentale implantée dans le monde musulman diffère catégoriquement de celle presentée par les auteurs de discours religieux.

Selon cette conception, le fondamentalisme n'est autre chose que l'intègrisme (tel que préconcise par certaines écoles chretiennes socio-politiques), le terrorisme ou le fanatisme aboutissant en definitive à

un refus catégorique de la vie moderne et contemporaine, pour s'instaurer dans un ghetto.

En revanche les disciples de cette école occidentale repliquent aux fondamentalismes musulmans en leur proposant le sécularisme comme concept alternatif formant ainsi un courant d'idées puissantes.

Le processus de secularisation se fait sentir dépuis maintenant plusieures décennies. Cette période en particulier a été marquée notamment dans les pays du maghreb par une tentative de mise en application de processus de sécularisation très accentués émettant ainsi en cause les formes islamiques traditionelles qui réglent les rapports sociaux et les pratiques économiques de la société. Nous pouvons relever quelques caractéristiques de cette expérience dans l'histoire de l'Algérie avec l'instauration après l'independence de l'autogestion et de la révolution agraire. Cette même operation socialisante avait été tentée en Tunisie par le gouvernement et la politique instaurées par Bourguiba. Ce genre de socialisme à la tunisienne a fini par ébranler les structures socio-economiques et politico-culturelles fortement enracinées dans le patrimoine islamique. Il est à noter que le changement opère en Tunisie a dépassé le stade des reformes sociales ou economiques.

Mohamed Arkoun, le penseur musulman contemporain, connu generalement par ses idées peu conformes à l'islam fondamentaliste qualifie les reformes de Bourguiba. Il écrit notamment:

" Les leaders nationalistes formés dans les lycées et les universités Francaises (Bourguiba et plusieurs membres du GPRA, Mehdi Ben Barka) avaient à coeur de relever le défi colonial en repandant chez eux des idées liberales allant plus dans le sens des lumières du XVIIIeme siècle que dans celui de l'Islam traditionnel. C'est ce qui explique les reformes courageuses d'un Bourguiba au lendemain de l'indépendence (Polygamie, divorce, ramadhan, statut general de la femme)."[4]

Le sécularisme ainsi defini et appliqué, traduit une volonté d'inspiration occidentale visant à séparer dans la société musulmane, la religion de l'état dans une première étape pour se debarrasser des fondements de l'Islam considerés par Mohamed Arkoun comme l'obstacle majeur empêchant la société musulmane d'atteindre le progrès est la modernité.

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(4) Mohammed Arkoun, *Pour Une Critique de la Raison Islamique*, Maisoneuve et larousse. Paris 1984, p. 351.

En ce sens, le sécularisme retrouve sa véritable dimension caractérisée par la volonté de separer la religion de l'état en faisant recours à la libéralisation de l'économie (libéralisation dans son sens exploitatif), ainsi qu'au relachement du système éducatif et des moeurs.

Devant une telle doctrine, la réaction des couches sociales musulmanes fut violente. Le concept de "sécularisme est percu par la masse, comme representant une idéologie étrangère et dangereuse porteuse d'idées hostiles rejoignant les concepts tels l'Athéisme et le matérialisme rejetant tous pouvoirs ou influences diverses.

L'opposition violente manifeste à l'egard du courant sécularisme dans le mouvement arabo-musulman a été provoquée par l'attitude de rejet de toute religion adoptée par le sécularisme, ce qui explique l'eruption du neo-fondamentalisme en courant puissant utilisé comme moyen et méthode capables de servir de remède à ce mal du siécle qu'est l'athéisme, et de preserver la foi de la grande masse musulmane.

Pour refuter la thèse sécularisme, les intellectuels musulmans pro-fondamentalistes ont utilisé comme base certains principes tels:

1- le rejet de la tendance athéiste sécularisme scientiste qui utilisait la science comme couverture.

2- La reconnaissance de Dieu-unique (Tawhid), ce qui produit une liberté individuelle et sociale parfaite, puisque cette reconnaissance de Dieu-unique implique l'obéissance exclusive de l'homme à Dieu, c'est à dire le rejet de toute servitude à l'homme divinisé qu'il soit colonisateur ou gouverneur autoritaire.

3- l'affirmation de l'Islam comme religion de la science et de la civilisation incitant à la maîtrise de tous les moyens modernes permettant aux musulmans contemporains atteindre les degrés les plus élevés du progrès.

4- la conception de la science doit être fondée sur les piliers de la foi : la science au sens islamique du terme n'est que l'émanation de la foi devant permettre à l'homme de rapprocher et non pas de s'en éloigner ou de s'auto-détruire.(5)

Le Fondamentalisme : Rapport temps-histoire

Le mot "fondamentalisme" dans la pensée islamique résume tout un discours liant deux autres concepts : l'histoire et le temps.

A l'analyse du contenu du discours islamique contemporain , nous relevons une analyse ou une similitude entre le fondamentalisme pris dans un sens

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(5) Sayyed Ahmed Darag, *Les Racines du Sécularism*. Le Caire . Al-Nafa, 1987, p. 44.

classique tendant à procéder à la purification de la société arabo-musulmane soumise à la vie rythmée conformément à la source d'inspiration symbolisée par le saint Coran et la tradition prophétique et un neo-fondamentalisme visant à appliquer la Shari'a (la loi de Dieu) dans tous les domaines de la vie humaine afin de se conformer à l'ordre divin stipulant que si un litige vous oppose remettez-vous en à Dieu et au prophète, si vous croyez vraiment en Dieu et au jour dernier. C'est un bien et la meilleure des issues.(6)

Pour se faire une idée exacte de l'histoire du fondamentalisme il y a lieu de mentionner que de nombreux debats ont marqué la marché et la pensée islamique opposant authentistes, salafistes et fondamentalistes aux (rationalistes) musulmans d'obédience grecque sur les bases devant régler les rapports entre les sciences religieuses et les sciences rationnelles. Parmi les penseurs qui doivent être cités à cet egard, nous relevons ceux d' Ibn Qutayba au III/IXeme siècle d'Al-Ghazali, d'Ibn Rochd et tant d'autres.(7)

Bien que le debat n' a jamais cessé de rebondir d'une période à une autre force est de constater que ce

(6) *Le Coran*, Sourat IV, Verset 59

(7) M. Arkoun, *Pour une Critiques de la Raison Islamique*, p.9

debat a pris aujourd'hui, une autre allure. Il a classé ainsi les intellectuels musulmans contemporains en deux catégories : celles des fondamentalistes qui prêchent le changement par la seule méthode islamique et celle des rationalistes assimilés aux secularistes revendiquant la modernisation de cette même société quitte à ébranler les convictions religieuses et à sacrifier la religion au profit du progrès scientifique et technologique .

Ainsi, la critique sévère entretenue entre les deux camps montre que les partisans des deux thèses restent majoritaires dans le monde musulman. Contentons-nous de citer à l'appui, l'exemple du philosophe Mohamed Arkoun dont la méthode et la conviction sont loin d'être fondamentalistes. Il juge sévèrement aussi bien les tenants du puritanisme nouveau style que les tenants du puritanisme traditionnel en les comparant aux defenseurs du libéralisme synonyme de l'athéisme émanant du sécularisme.

Les Ulama contemporains, écrit Arkoun, ne disposent pas plus que les anciens de l'appareil conceptuel qui permet de rendre compte sans les opposer de l'attitude Usuli et de l'attitude philosophique. Le mythe, le mythologique, le rite, le capital symbolique, le signe linguistique, les structures élémentaires de la signification, la métaphore, la narrativité, l'historicité, le conscient et l'inconscient, l'imaginaire social, la représentation, le système de

croyance et de non croyance...sont autant de concepts sans cessé retravailles dans la recherche en cours.

Cet appareil dans la recherche est totalement impensé dans la pensée Usuli[8].

L'école fondamentaliste ainsi presentée est mise en difficulté. Son discours religieux est condamné a n'être qu'un contenu denoncé de normes rituelles, juridiques, éthiques ou théologiques. Peut-on alors admettre la conclusion de Mr Arkoun selon laquelle la raison religieuse developpée en islam peut étouffer la recherche scientifique?

Poser déjà une telle question serait, à notre avis, traduire une volonté tendanceuse visant a déformer certaines vérités et à prouver une certaine incomprehension consciente ou inconsciente du discours religieux en islam. Ou alors, comment expliquerait-on l'ère scientifique ayant marqué pour le developpement de la recherche scientifique l' histoire de la pensée islamique?

Quoiqu'il en soit le fondamentalisme analyse en toute objectivité est loin de s'opposer à la bonne marché du temps. Bien au contraire cette école riche en normes et en valeurs se veut le meilleur garant de l'histoire arabo-islamique avec toutes ses significations profondes.

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(8) M. Arkoun, Pour une critique de la Raison Islamique, P.19.

II- Le Sécularisme : base de l'organisation de la vie

Le sécularisme est un concept importé de l'occident pour designer tout ce qui est irreligieux. Il prêche initialement la separation de l'église et de l'état avant de s'étendre aux autres religions et autres sociétés non européennes.

Le sécularisme a fait son apparition en tant que courant dans la société arabo-musulmane à la suite de la défaite militaire subite par les arabes en 1967. Un slogan fut lancé reclamant "la sécularisation de la personne par sa delivrance du gang religieux". [9]

Il va sans dire qu'une telle conception n'est que l'echo de la tendance laique puissante ayant déjà marqué l'évolution de la pensée européene occidentale. Certains intellectuels musulmans, éblouis par la civilisation de l'occident, ont vu dans son mode de vie, le meilleur moyen pour resoudre les problèmes de notre société.

Les fondements de la laicité s'articulent sur quatre éléments piliers de la vie humaine, à savoir : l'économie, la justice, l'enseignement, et le pouvoir politique. Pour donner à tous ces domaines leur veritable dimension. L'idée secularise vise à réaliser les objectifs suivants :

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(9) Anouar Al Goundi, *Refutation de la Laicité* . Beyrout, Dar Al Kitab, 1973, p.9.

1- La separation de la religion de la société par l'encouragement de l'instauration d'une education laique, l'etablissement d'un regime politique n'inspirant pas ses lois de la shari'a et l'édification d'une économie basée sur l'usure.

2- L'élimination d'un secteur authentique de la pensée humaine representée par l'âme, la revélation, le mystère divin, avec tous les éléments qui en découlent, tels la religion, la morale, la foi, en les eloignant totalement de la pensée et de la vie humaine.

Voilà donc pourquoi le sécularisme continue à recontrer dans le monde musulman une resistance farouche l'obligeant à abandonner une partie de ses armes ou à changer ses méthodes.

L'Islam, religion de la tolérance par excellence, admet et favorise la cohabitation pacifique avec les autres religions: quant à la laicité, même lorsqu'elle est admise par certains mouvements islamiques fondamentalistes, elle ne l'est que par respect au principe de le liberté de confession et d'opinion.

Le Fondamentalisme et le Sécularisme Théorie et pratique

L'observateur historien, méditant sur la realité idéologique qu'offre la société musulmane à l'étude relève deux lignes de pensées ou deux perspectives distinctes parfois opposées autour desquelles se cristalisent les analyses philosophiques et socio-politiques.

La réalité idéologique de la communauté musulmane est centrée, en effet, sur le bouillonnement qui caractérise la vie musulmane aujourd'hui et qui la place à l'actualité des medias par l'intermédiaire de differents mouvements.

Il y a tout d'abord ces mouvements qui repondent à des principes d'origines islamiques et qui agissent conformement à des programmes puisant leurs sources dans l'Islam. De même, nous relèvons la presence, au sein de la société arabo-islamique, d'une intense activité menée par des organisations opérant sur des bases islamiques. Nous retrouvons ainsi, l'énonce d'un programme riche de concepts et d'enseignements proposés à l'application. Les artisans de ce programme, ou les pères fondateurs de l'école fondamentaliste moderne, a quelques exceptions près, ont milité en faveur d'un véritable changement dans le monde musulman.

Bien que ces fondamentalistes ne sont pas forcement d'une même école, et n'adhèrent pas tous au même programme, ils se rencontrent cependant autour de l' idée dominante qui demeure la recuperation du pouvoir à base du programme islamique. Certes, nous trouvons au sein de l'école fondamentaliste, des extrémistes et des modernes, mais la source et le but demeurent les mêmes.

Dans chaque pays musulman, il y a des disciples de l'école fondamentaliste qui a relayé le mouvement des reformateurs salafistes qui prêchaient le retour à l'Islam des premiers siècles. Parmi ceux ci, nous citons Jamal-al-Din Al-Afghani, Muhammad Abdu, Rachid Reda, Muhammad Iqbal, AbIbn-Badis, considerés comme les fondateurs du reformisme musulman.

Le reformisme musulman, tel que presenté par ses fondateurs, visait la réalisation des deux objectifs :

(i) Reconstruire une société islamique meilleure debarassée de toutes formes de servitude, d'immobilisme et de charlatanisme dans le but de retrouver une souveraineté confisquée, et une unite perdue.

(ii) relèver le défi idéologique et faire aux ennemis de l'Islam qui, aveugles par leur ignorance et par leur

fanatisme, n'avaient cessé de lancer des campagnes hostiles à l'Islam en vue de déformer son visage et de démoraliser l'individu musulman. Est-il necéssaire de rappeler ici les attaques lancées contre l'Islam par des penseurs europeens comme Voltaire, Ernest Renan, Malraux, et autres...

Nous gardons toujours en mémoire les expressions de Voltaire qui accablaient l'Islam et son prophète. N'a-t-il pas écrit sa pièce "Mahomet et le Fanatisme", cette pièce qu'il dedia au Pape en ces termes : "Je veux consacrer au chef de la véritable religion un écrit contre le fondateur d'une religion fausse et barbare." (10)

Ernest Renan utilisait contre l'Islam des termes indignes d'une société dite civilisée. Le moderé parmi ces adversaires fut Malraux qui ecrivait dans les Noyes de l'Altenberg : "L'Islam toute l'asie peut-être s'interésse à Dieu, mais à l'homme jamais" (11).

Les penseurs occidentaux de prétendre, peut-être convaincus ou peut-être malicieusement, que l'Islam a trop donné à Dieu et a trop enlevé à l'homme. Ceci

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(10) Voltaire, *Essai sur les Moeurs*. Vol. 2 . Paris. Edit Garnier 1963.

(11) *Islam et Philosophie des lumières.*

traduit donc le souci des reformistes musulmans de rendre justice à l'Islam et aux musulmans en menant une action reformiste en profondeur.

A ces pères fondateurs du reformisme, se joignent les theoriciens des programmes revolutionnaires dans la communauté musulmane qui ont formé toute une école idéologique fondée sur le fondamentalisme USUL et donc souvent qualifiée de neo-fondamentalisme.

Parmi les mouvements pionniers s'inscrivant dans ce courant figurent les Fères Musulmans en Egypte. La Jamaat al-Islamia en Inde, la Da'wa au Maghreb, et le Wahabisme en Arabie Seoudite. Parmi les leaders de ces mouvements, nous citons, à titre d'exemple, Hassan Al-Banna, Sayyed Kotb, Abu-Al-A'la AL-Mawdudi, Ali Shariati, Malek Bennabi, et Hassan Al-Turabi.

Il suffit de méditer sur les oeuvres de ces theoriciens du neo-fondamentalisme, pour se rendre compte du programme du discours Islamique contemporain. Ce programme que preconisent ces pionners de la révolution Islamique, ne concerne certainement pas les principes ni les dogmes de l'Islam, mais les institutions qui s'en reclament. Il ne remet pas non plus en cause les vérités intangibles de

l'Islam, mais l'interprétation qui en est faite et la manière dont elles sont transmises.

A titre d'exemple, nous donnons ces titres pour permettre au lecteur de mieux percevoir le message du discours religieux, qualifié de fondamentaliste, en Islam :

1) Hassan Al-Banna : Memoires de la Prédication et du Predicateur.
2) Sayyed Kotb : Jalons sur la Route.
3) Ali Shariati : UN Etat Legitime et Juste.
4) Abu-Al-A'la Al-Mawdudi:
    a) Concepts Islamiques Autour de le Religion et de l'Etat.
    b) La Civilisation Occidentale et Nous.
5) Malek Bennabi :
    a) Les Conditions de la Renaissance .
    b) Le Musulman dans la Monde Economique.
6) Abdellatif Soltani : Le Manichéisme est la Source du Socialisme.

Nous estimons qu'en se limitant à ces titres nous pouvons mesurer la dimension du vaste programme élabore par des neo-fondamentalistes. Ajoutons à cela,

pour compléter notre exposé, que les grandes lignes de ce programme s'articulent autour des principes suivants arretés par l'idéologue Mawdudi :

Dans la vie individuelle, familiale et sociale, tous les gens sont pareillement soumis à la loi, sans aucune distinction de race, d'ethnie ou de classe. La loi doit régler uniformement tous les aspects de la vie(12).

Mawdudi presénte l'Islam comme une troisième voie entre le capitalisme et le communisme; il préconise une économie Islamique fondée sur les trois principes suivants :

1) la loi Islamique de l'heritage .
2) la zakat (le système Islamique d'encaissement et de redistribution d'impots).
3) La suppression de l'usure et du prêt à intêret (riba)(13).

S'agissant du pouvoir politique symbolisé par l'état. Mawdudi definit les fondements de l'état Islamique voulu, et insiste notamment sur deux points:

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(12) *Radicalismes Islamiques*. T. 2, p. 47.
(13) IDEM, p.48.

Premièrement , la Shari'a doit devenir la loi mère, c'est-a-dire la necessité d'appliquer la shari'a intégralement à l'ensemble des domaines du droit civil , criminel, et constitutionnel .

Deuxièmement, le pouvoir politique doit être exercé par des hommes qui soient religieusement et moralement droits (Salih). Seuls de tels hommes peuvent permettre aux citoyens de mener une vie proprement Islamique[14) .

Voilà donc les grandes lignes de la théorie fondamentaliste dans le monde musulman d'aujourd'hui. Reste maintenant l'autre concept de notre étude à savoir le Sécularisme. Ce mouvement, bien qu'il continue à avoir des partisans qui demeurent nombreux, commence, à notre avis à perdre de la vitesse et à abandonner, de plus en plus, de terrain sur le champ arabo-islamique au profit de la thèse neo-fondamentaliste.

Ce jugement est d'une portée plus quantative que qualitative. Quant à la qualité des partisans sécularistes, notamment les intellectuels parmi eux, ils restent tres valablés et actifs.

En effet, Mustapha Kemal Ataturk qui

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(14) IDEM.

symbolise la première mise en application du régime secularisme dans le monde musulman, a eu depuis de nombreux disciples à travers la carte Islamique.

Auteurs du livre "L'Islam en Questions", nous donnent les reponses a certains questions posées à un grand nombre d'ecrivains "arabes", qui tous s'opposent à une éventuelle application de la Shari'a' en citant des "arguments" à l'appui, et en attirant l'attention de l'opinion politique sur le "danger" couru en ademettant une telle realité. Ceci montre alors que les tenants d'un tel sécularisme restent importants en quantité et en qualité, aussi bien dans le Machrek que dans le Maghreb.

La bataille reste longue et dure, et l'élimination du spectre de la confrontation n'est pas pour demain en tous cas.

Origins of Islamic Fundamentalism in Egypt

Mahmudul Haq Algarih (*)

The story of modern Islamic thought in Egypt is the story of the encounter between the traditional Islam as practised throughout the centuries and the Western civilization during the 19th and early 20th century. The encounter brought about changes in the social, economic, political and cultural life of the people, which in turn generated tension and conflict in the minds of many Egyptian intellectuals. One group of intelligentsia, mostly led by the Christians, advocated the cause of secularism. The chief among them were Shibli Shumayyil, Farah Antun, Salama Mussa and others (1). They followed the Darwinian path of evolution. Ismail Mazhar (1), among the Muslims, was the strong defender of social Darwinism in Egypt. The other group, that of the nationalists, like Mustafa Kamil, Saad Zaghloul, following the pan-Islamic thinker Jamal al-Din al-Afghani, adopted a path of struggle for national independence. On the religiois plane, the problem with which I am presently concerned, the Western impact resulted in the division of the "Ulama" into

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two factions: the one favouring change in response to the Western challenge. and the other adopting totally antagonistic attitude towards everything which was new and which the West was presenting. The University of al-Azhar was the epitome of this conservative trend. It was not for the first time that Islam had entered into a conflict, but earlier too, in the medieval period, Islam faced such conflict under the impact of Hellenism giving birth to "*Ilm al-Kalam*- a science which tried to reconcile the irreconcilable, and and soon to be condemned and discarded by the fundamentalist theologians. The Hellenistic thought was represented mainly by the Aristotelian philosophy, which introduced a new intellectual technique, and an instrument of thought which deeply influenced the whole theological structure of Islam. Thus the tension and conflict, which Islam faced in the modern period, was not a new phenomenon of its history, and as mentioned above, the main reactions were: nationalistic, secularistic and religious. However, at present I am concernd with the last reaction, which took the form of modernistic interpreatation of Islam. From the outset it must be borne in mind that there is an important difference between the two encounters: the first was a conflict which resulted in a "symbiosis" on the philosophical plane, whereas the latter encounter was, from the very

beginning, of a political nature, i.e. struggle against colonial domination. Thus, whereas in the former case it resulted in the rise of the so-called raitionalism in Islam, the latter event gave birth to a strong feeling of nationalism against colonialism. The nationalists, and the traditionalist "Ulama" lived in harmony and joined hands whereas the modernists, remained very weak and often depended on the support of the colonial powers. Since then the contemporary Muslim intelligentsia have been living a state of mind which can best be described as schizophrenic. It was the result of the Muslim modernist attempt to integrate the liberal scientific ideas of the West with the philosophical structure of Islam and create a new synthesis by replacing the traditional structure.This conflict and tension of old and new in Islam still goes on, each one struggling for legitimacy. The traditional Islam represented more or less a well-defined social organism with definite notions regarding family and society and the state.

The aim of this moderni[illegible]mist movement was to associate Islam with the new liberal values of the West. In the 19th century this movement was spearheaded by Muslim reformers like Hassan al-Attar, abd al-Rahman al-Jabarti, Rifa'ah Rafi' al Tahtawi. They had imbibed the influence of the West

during the French occupation of Egypt. These reformers were very much enamoured by the progress in Europe. Educated at the great seminary of al-Azhar and aware of the pitiful decline of their co-religionists, they strove to bring out a rapprochement between science and religion, and interpreted theology conductive to the liberalization of the tradition-bound Islamic society. Their legacy was however, continued by Muhammad' Abduh and his progressive followers who subsequently came to form "Abduh School" in Egypt.

Inspired by the leberal thought of the West and often in contradistinction to the teaching of Abduh in many respects, there appeared a group of Islamic intellectuals who were more inclined towards a radical-historical interpretation of Islamic values while fighting bigotry and obscurantism. The chief exponents of this trend were Shaykh Ali Abd al-Raziq, Khalid Muhammad Khalid, Abdullah al-Qusaymi, and Taha Hussayn during the early period of his life. Their writings evoked the anger of the conservative milieu of al-Azhar that charged them of deviation and disbelief.

An important aspect of the adherents of this school was their attempt to draw a distinction between

the spiritual and the temporal, in the juridical terms between *ibadat*(2) and *mu'amalat*(3). In this way an attempt was made to lay the foundation of the development of secularism in Islam. What they purported to say was that everything has been finally decided by the Qur'an and the Sunnah, but temporal matters came under human preview and that these can be solverd through *ijtihad*, i.e. by human reasoning(4).

For them the theological device *maslaha or al-Masalih al-mursilah*(5), as worked out by Imam Malik, became an important expedient. Their basic postulate, as Albert Hourani points out, was that consideration of the best interests of the *ummah* would never result in solutions incompatible with the spirit, and even more the objective facts of the Qur'an and the Sunnah. They claimed that only general principles have been revealed by God. They must be applied to the specific problems of social life by human reason, the guiding principle being the general welfare of mankind"(6).

The liberal school could not go further. It soon found itself aligned with the colonial rule to enlist its support against the nationalists. The historic limitations of this school consisted in their failure to unite Islamic liberalism with the cause of political freedom, thus resulting in alienation from the national

upsurge. This movement met with a strong opposition from the conservative and reactionary sections of the Muslim intelligentsia whose ideological origins could be traced back to the teachings of medieval Muslim fundamentalists. Due to the congenial political and social conditions prevailing in Egypt at that time the conservative reaction gained upperhand. In the 1930s Egypt saw a spurt in fanaticism and conservative reaction, which culminated in the formation of such fundamentalist organizations as the Muslim Brotherhood (*al Ikhwan al-Muslimun*) founded by Hassan al-Banna in 1928 and the young Egypt (*Misr al-Fatat*)(7) founded by Ahmad Hussayn in 1933. Both organizations claimed to be the champioons of Islam. They vehemently attacked westernisaton of the Egyptian society and made the Christian missions as special targets of their attack. It was during this period that they started a fanatic campaign against Shaykh Ali Abd al-Raziq and were successful in securing his condemnation on account of his book *al-Islam wa usual al-Hukm*, published in 1925 in which he had pled the cause of secularism and strongly criticized the politicization of Islam. Religious chauvinism became the latent force in the hands of the different political parties. Many progressive individuals succumbed to the pressure of Islamic chauvinism. George Anawati visualizing the situation at that time

has said: "The nationalism forced some Christians into an apology of the official religion to forward proofs of their patriotism. Christian secularist, like Salama Moussa, declared that Islam is the religion of my country and my duty is to defend it. Similarly Makram Ebeid said in 1936: "It is true I am Christian by religion but remain a Muslim by patriotism". It was during this period that Taha Hussayn who had earlier written *al-shi'ral-Jahili* in 1926 attacking tradition wrote three volumes on the life of the Prophet: *Ala Hamish al-Sira*. Muhammad Husayn Haykal, editor of the liberal newspaper *al-Siyasa*, concentrated his attention of the Sirah of the Prophet: *Hayat Muhammad (1935)*, and Abbas Mahmud al-Aqqad brought out a series of books based on the life and achievementrs of the heroes of Islam known as *the Abqariayyat*, beginning with the life of the Prophet *Abqariyat Muhammad*.(8) Tawfik al-Hakim serialised in a dialogue form, different episodes from the life of the Prophet. In 1940 Ministry of Education gave official recognition and encouragement to the popular religious publications. The purpose of most of these studies was not to make objective studies of the history of Islam but to give to the nationalistic feelings a marked religious taint. These intellectuals were those who, a few years ago, had led attacks on dogmatism and reaction. By 1930 they had abandoned

the cause of enlightenment and surrendered before the fundamentalists. In the words of P.J.V. Vatikiotus: "Their reverential studies of the early fathers of the Islamic community smacked of frantic and solicitous apologia for their earlier rationalist-secular attacks upon the religion and its cultural heritage."(9) Their writings paved the way for the growth of reaction in Egypt.

Thus by the 1930s the influence of the liberals led by "Abduh and his followers such as Qasim Amin, Mustafa abd al-Raziq and Ali abd al-Raziq was replaced by the pan Islamist agitator and activist Sayyid Jamal al-Din al-Afghani, epitomized in Sayyid Rashid Rida (d. 1935) leader of the neo-wahhabite Salafiyya movment and editor of *al-Manar*. He tried to politicize Islam fully. In this regard he was the precursor of the *Ikhwan al-Muslimun* founded by one of his disciples Hassan al-Banna. It was his belief that Islam will cease to exist if a universal Islamic state embracing the entire *ummah* is not created under a supreme Caliph-Sultan.



Hssan al- Banna

The movement initiated by Rashid Rida, which

subsequently came to be known as the Salafiyya movement, condemned *bida'* (innovation creativity) which had accumulated around the faith during the course of centuries; and gave a call of return to the practices of the pious ancestors (*al-salaf- al-salih*) "whose unstinted orthodoxy, holiness and piety make them worthy of being regarded as guides and models". This perfect "fidelity" to the tradition of the Salaf was the starting point for these orthodox reformists.



Rashid Rida

Although there is vagueness as regards who constituted the Salaf, yet there seems to be certain understanding about it. By Salaf is generally meant the first three generations (*qarn*) of men who lived during the same period of seventy or eighty years. By the first three generations is meant the period of the Prophet and his Companions (*Shaba or Ashab*), their followers (*tabi'un*) and the successors of the latter (*atba' al-tabi'un*). In this connection certain Traditions of the Prophet are quoted such as the

following one: Honour my Companions and those who follow them and those who follow these; after which untruth will prevail.(10) The Salafiyya leaders were in fact the neo-Hanbalites. It was through the writings of Ibn Taimiyyah (1263-1368) and Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyya (1292-1350) that the reformists built up their basic formulations of reforms. In the eyes of those reformists, Ibn Taimiyyah(3) was a MuJaddid (Renovator) of the 7th century.(4) His call for the return to the original purity of Islam, his rejection of taqlid and vehement condemneation of bida' and excessive sufism were held in high esteem by the founder of the Wahhabi Movement and the orthodox reformists of the 19th century. The chief characteristic of Ibn Taimiyyah's teaching was that, in his opinion, the Divine will cannot be fulfilled by more observing the shari'a as a means of inividual salvation but by the establishment of a virtuous society which will be implemented by the collective will of the ummah.

The Salafiyya movement was a neo-puritanical-Hanbalite movement. It was immediately influenced by Wahhabism which appeared in Central Arabia under the leadership of Muhammad Ibn Abd al-Wahhab (d.1792). This pre-Nahda 18th century movemnt was the precursor of the later Salafiyyah

movement in Egypt and the Ahl-i-Hadith movement in the Indian sub-continent and the Mohamadia movement in Indonesia. It is generally known that these neo-Wahhabis were deeply influenced by the teachings of Ibn Taimiyyah - Ibn Qayyim - Abd al Wahhab and they emerged as the greatest upholders of the traditions of the *Salaf*. They rejected all authorities except the authority of the Qur'an and the Sunnah and launched a vigorours moveement in support of Unity (*Tawhid*) and rejection of polymorphism, all superstitions inherited from the medieval past.

The Salafis were fundamentalists; but they were also reformists. While going back to the pristine purity of Islam or its fundamental, they also attacked rigid dogmatism in the form of *taqlid* and called for a new superstructure of *fiqh* based on Kitab and the Sunnah with some modernist interpretations. However, the conservative fundamentalism preached by the Salafis was superseded by the new religious-political organization of the Ikhwan al-Muslimun which wanted to establish a theocratic society in Egypt. With the rise of the *Ikhwan* the politicization of Islam was complete. It raised the slogans: Allah is our aim, the Prophet our leader, the Qur'an our constitution, holy war (*jihad*) our way, death in Allah's way our supreme desire. Politically, Banna

was hostile to democracy and socialism but evinced great sympathy for Nazism. In its internal, organization *Ikhwan* suggested a surrogate kinship structure with membership divided into families, class and battalions. In 1940 a secret terrorist organization known as "secret apparatus for the defense of Islam and society" was formed with German assistance and its members were given military training. The organization claimed to have more than 5.00.000 members in Egypt and many more sympathizers. It fanned out its branches in several Arab countries especially Syria, Jordan, Lebanon, and the Sudan. During the 1940s its members played prominent role in the internal affairs of the Egypt. The organization was responsible for numerous political assassinations, bomb blasts and arsens. It was dissolved in 1948 by Nuqrashi Pasha, then prime minister, who was assassinated three weeks later by a Brotherhood member. Banna himself was shot dead the following year probably by government secret agents.

Ideologically speaking, Islam still remained a utopia in the mind of the founder. He was in favour of the restoration of the idealized Islam on the pattern of the "rightly guided Caliph, which he called *al-nizam al-Islami* (The Islamic order) in the place of the present order which he termed as *al-nizam al-Jahili*

(the order of the pre-Islamic Jahiliyya period). However, after the death of Banna, a more aggressive view of Islam, perhaps under the influence of Abu'l Ala Mawdudi, was accepted by *Ikhwan* under the leadership of Sayyid Qutub followed by a more anarchic version given by Shukri Mustafa and others.

NOTES

1. See especially his *Falsafat al-nushu' wa'l-Irtiqa.* Asl al Anwa'. Eng. tr. of *The Origin of Species.*
2. Matters relating to Divine Worship.
3. Matters relating to worldly affairs.
4. To form opinion with reasoning in a case (*qadiyya*) - Synonymous with *qiyas* (analogical reasoning) or *ra'y* (opinion) with Shafi'i.
5. Also *istislah.*
6. See Muhammad Abduh *Risalah*; of Albert Hourani, *Arabic Thought in the Liberal Age* (Oxford, 1970), pp. 151-52.
7. To oppose the *Ikwan* renamed itself National Islamic Party in 1940. Its youth wing was known as *al-qumsan al-Khadra* (The Green Shirts).
8. *The Genius of Muhammad.*
9. *The Modern History of Egypt* (London, 1969), p. 323.
10. Rashid Rida, *Tafsir al-Manar,* VIII. 50 of A Merad, *Islah* in E.I.

Philosophy vs. Islamic Fundamentalism

Adel Daher (*)

It has been customary, when dealing with the anti-secularist stance of Muslim fundamentalists, to ignore the epistemological problems generated by it. In my judgement, only one decisive way to deal with the anti-fundamentalist stance of Muslim fundamentalism, namely to refute the epistemological thesis implicit in that stance. This thesis can be initially stated in the following manner: man is not in a position to know the right way to organize his worldly affairs without divine guidance.

Let us begin our discussion of the above thesis by considering first one claim that appears to be crucial to fundamentalists. This claim is that Islam, unlike the other monotheistic religions, is not merely concerned with man's spiritual salvation, but is also concerned with how man should live in the here and now. This claim is quite harmless, of course, if it is merely intended as a historical claim about Islam, i.e., as a claim to the effect that Islam, because of the historical circumstances in which it found itself at the beginning, found it necessary to combine spiritual with non-spiritual concerns. For if so understood, such

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claim would not be contested by anyone in or outside Islam. What might be contested here and has been contested is the claim that Islam embraced the idea of a theocratic state[1]. But nobody denies the historical fact that Islam had to address itself to earthly questions concerning how man should live and organize his life on all levels.

The problem, however, is that fundamentalists want to convert what is true of Islam, as a matter of historical fact, into a claim that is true of it as a matter of logic[2]. Put differently, Muslim fundamentalists are not prepared to see that there is no more than a historical connection between Islam, on the one hand, and a concern with worldly matters, on the other hand. It is their unshaken belief that Islam provides us with the answers to all our important questions about worldly matters, regardless of the historical circumstances in which we find ourselves. That this is true of Islam is a matter that has to do with the nature of Islam and not with circumstances external to it. Islam in its very essence embraces a comprehensive system of ideas and principles touching on all matters that are of importance for man's spiritual salvation as well as for his worldly affairs. Moreover, man, regardless of the time and place, is not in a position to know how to live and how to organize his political,

social and economic affairs independently of the knowledge Islam provides on these matters.

In the light of the above, we take the core belief of Muslim fundamentalists with regard to secularization to be that man is not appropriately positioned to know how to organize his worldly affairs independently of knowing what God commands him to do with regard to these matters. But for the Muslim fundamentalists, for man to know what God commands him to do with regard to the matters in question is for him to know the teachings of Islam on these questions, for they express divine intentions and injunctions. Thus, the ultimate stance of the Muslim fundamentalists vis-à-vis the question of secularization is that it is unacceptable for reasons, not merely of a religious nature, but also of an epistemological nature. In other words, it is not merely the case that Islam, in its very essence, requires that we organize our worldly affairs in accordance with its principles, but it is also the case that if we fail to do so and rely, instead, on other guiding principles, we will not be appropriately positioned, epistemologically, to give correct answers to questions pertaining to how we ought to organize our worldly affairs. This is the strongest claim that could be made by the anti-secular Muslim.

We can state this claim in the following way: man's knowledge of how he ought to organize his worldly affairs is ultimately derived from religious knowledge. Let us call this type of knowledge 'practical knowledge'. And how the thesis of the fundamentalist can be restated in the following manner: man's practical knowledge finds its ultimate basis in religious knowledge.

In dealing with this thesis, we shall address ourselves to the following questions: first, what are the basic ingredients of practical knowledge? Second, what are we to understand by religious knowledge? Third, does any of the ingredients of practical knowledge find its ultimate basis in religious knowledge?

Let us turn now to our first question. To have practical knowledge is to know what ends ought to be pursued and to know how to go about pursuing and fulfilling them. To know, for example, whether to organize society along capitalistic or socialistic lines is to determine, first, what ultimate ends the organization of society ought to serve and to determine, second, which type of social or political or economic arrangement would bring us closer to achieving these ends. The first type of knowledge required is normative and, ultimately, moral. For what

we are required to know here is what sort of things are *intrinsically good* or of *ultimate* social importance or most urgent or *superior* to all others. Thus, what we are required to know here is what ends take precedence over all other ends, and this is really tantamount to saying that what we are required to know is what ends are moral.

Practical knowledge involves not only knowledge of ends but also knowledge of the means necessary for achieving these ends. And the latter is of a scientific nature. It is, strictly speaking, applied scientific knowledge. But the latter presupposes theoretical scientific knowledge, and thus we can say that theoretical scientific knowledge is indirectly involved in practical knowledge. If we want to know, for example, what means are necessary to bring about a more humane and more just society, then, on the assumption that we have well-defined criteria for what it is for society to be just and humane, we have to determine how we ought to organize society on all levels to fulfill the ends required by these criteria. If we symbolize the ends required by these criteria by "E" then what would be required of us is to determine whether the nature of the social entity we are dealing with or the level of its historical evolution makes it feasible to achieve"E" and, if so, what sorts of socio-

political re-organization would be needed to achieve it. What we need, in short, is applied social knowledge. But this applied social knowledge presupposes some theoretical knowledge about the nature of social and historical development. We cannot know how to re-organize some society to achieve some given end or come closer to achieving it, unless we know what *type* of society it is and to what extent it can be changed and what *type* of institutions it has and how they influence each other. And the latter presupposes some theoretical knowledge of a social and historical nature.

Social knowledge is not the only type of scientific knowledge required for obtaining practical knowledge. We can think here of several situations where practical knowledge would involve some physical knowledge. Consider questions about how to deal with our physical environment to serve man's purposes or how to improve man's technology to make it more effective for him to cope with some newly emerging problems, whether of an economic or a non-economic nature. In either case, it is obvious that knowledge of the type provided by the physical sciences is of utmost importance. Thus it is the case that practical knowledge involves or would involve scientific knowledge of the social as well as of the

physical variety, in addition to normative or moral knowledge.

Let us turn now to the concept of religious knowledge and what it involves. It is important to keep in mind here that the concept of religious knowledge that is of concern to us is that which applies within Judaeo-Christian tradition to which Islam belongs. The ultimate object of religious knowledge within that tradition is God. The core belief shared by all religions within that tradithe belief that there is one and only one eternally omnipresent creator of everything that exists who is omnipotent, omniscient, wholly good, perfectly free and a source of moral obligation, and this eternal creator is God, the necessary being (3). To have religious knowledge in the requisite sense is to know that this belief is true and to know any of the truths deducible from it.

Religious knowledge, however, is not exhausted by this. Any knowledge that we could attain of God, whether of his attributes or his actions or his intentions is part of religious knowledge in the sense that concerns us here. If God, for example, performed a certain action such as banishing the Jews or parting the Red Sea or communicating the prophet Mohammed, then for us to know that God did that is for us to have religious knowledge. Further, if God

created something, like the human brain whose essential function is to think and reason, then it must have been His *intention* that the brain exist for the purpose of thinking and reasoning, and to know that God created the brain is to know what God *intended* in creating it.

We conclude, then, that any knowledge of God's attributes or actions and intentions as well as any knowledge that is a logical consequence of the former is an item of religious knowledge. But one important thing for our purposes that needs to be explored is the logical status of propositions that constitute the object of religious knowledge. In other words, what sort of propositions are propositions such as 'God is eternal', 'God is omnipotent', 'God commands us to refrain from evil', 'God intended to give man a free will' and the like? It might be suggested that we view all these propositions as necessary on the ground that all of God's attributes, actions and intentions flow necessarily from His essence. God, being the necessary creator of everything that exists is necessarily ontologically independent of everything else. But this, in turn, means that necessarily He is not subject to any external influences, causal or otherwise. He is an absolutely independent being. Thus, whatever attributes He possesses, it is His essence and

His essence alone that determines that He should possess them (4). Again, whatever actions He performs and whatever are the intentions that these actions are supposed to fulfill, there is and can be nothing beyond His essence that determines that He should perform them to fulfill the intentions in question.

To say that His attributes, actions, and intentions are necessary should be taken to mean that it is not logically conceivable that God might not have had the attributes and intentions He in fact has or might *cease* to have them, nor is it conceivable that He might have not performed any of His actions. If it is a necessary truth that God possess P or that God performs A (where 'P' and 'A' denote properties and actions consecutively), then it would be incoherent to suppose that God does not possess P or does not perform A or to suppose that He might have lacked P or refrained from doing A.

If we view the logical status of religious propositions in this way, then practical knowledge would not find its ultimate basis in religious knowledge. The reason for this is that propositions, which are involved in practical knowledge (i.e., propositions of the moral type and scientific type), do not have the same logical status that religious

propositions have. They appear to be contingent at best. Thus they cannot be epistemologically grounded, except in propositions of their own kind. It would in fact be totally futile to attempt to derive them from religious propositions, which are being construed on the view under examination, as necessary, for necessity is a logically hereditary property. To say it is logically hereditary is to say that it is the kind of property which, when the premises have it, it must, if the argument is valid, be transmitted from the premises to the conclusion. Its being a logically hereditary property is derived from the fact that truth is logically hereditary. In a valid argument, it is logically impossible for the premises to be true and the conclusion to be false. But if the premises of a valid argument are necessary, then it is impossible for them to be false. Therefore, it must also hold true of the conclusion of this argument that it is necessary in the same sense, otherwise it would be possible, on some interpretation of that argument, to have true premises and a false conclusion. But the latter is excluded by the very definition of a valid argument. Therefore, it is impossible for the conclusion of a valid argument to be contingent when its premises are necessary.

The question before us now is the one concerning what logical status to assign to the propositions that constitute the possible objects of practical knowledge. If we take, first, scientific propositions, their contingency does not seem to be in doubt. In fact, it appears that the main criterion for whether a proposition is scientific is whether it is the sort of proposition that can be refuted or disconfirmed in principle. And this is not simply to say that a scientific proposition is such that if the actual evidence available to us supports it, we can still conceive of the evidence being different from what it in fact is and supporting its opposite. It is also to say that even if we assume that we are in a position to *know* that it is true, we can still conceive of certain knowable conditions under which it would have been false. And the latter appears to entail two things, namely that that proposition might have been false and that had it been false, it would have been possible for us to know that.

Even if we look at matters from a purely theistic point of view, the contingency of scientific propositions cannot be in doubt. If we take scientific propositions to be, in the main, causal propositions, then to construe such propositions as necessary would constitute a limitation on God's power. God, being

omnipotent and necessarily so, must eternally not be subject to causal laws and suspend any of them at will. It is not enough here, to secure God's omnipotence, to say that the existence of causes is contingent on God's will. The reason has to do with the fact that if effects flowed necessarily from the nature of their causes, then a being who would bring about a system of causality would bind the future, making it impossible for anybody, including himself, to suspend causal laws or interfere in their operation. Thus if a being is necessarily omnipotent, then that being cannot bind the future and, consequently, cannot create causes whose effects are determined necessarily by them.

Let us turn now to normative (moral) propositions. The truth of some such propositions, on the assumption that there is truth in morality, (5) is contingent on many things: on human nature and human needs being what they are, on social and historical conditions and the like. But human nature and needs, as well as the social and historical conditions of man, do not constitute some sort of a fixed essence. Therefore, because a moral proposition cannot be true unless the conditions pertaining to man's nature and needs as well as his socio-historical conditions are what they are, such propositions might

have been false because these conditions might have been different.

The contingency of moral propositions can be shown in a different way. Such propositions are basically about what one ought to do or refrain from doing. The question before us now is: what does it mean to say that one ought to do A? If we are taking 'ought' in its moral sense here, then to say the latter is to say that there are morally relevant considerations that require that one do A. But as we all know these considerations, no matter what they happen to be, do not *absolutely* require that one do A, for there could be other morally relevant considerations that require that one do B and the circumstances could be such that doing A conflicts with doing B. Thus to say that one ought to do A is to say, at best, that one is under a *prima facie* obligation to do A. And the latter that, being our actual obligation in the given situation, is *contingent on there being no morally relevant considerations that override the considerations for doing A*. In other words, when we say that doing A in a given situation is our duty proper or overall, we logically presuppose that the situation in question is such that there are no morally relevant considerations that outweigh the ones for doing A. But there might have been such considerations, and therefore, *it might not have been true* that doing A is our duty proper.

The above analysis proves that moral propositions are contingent in the sense that any such proposition that we take to be true is such that it might have been false. For if there could in theory always exist certain conditions that generate morally relevant considerations that outweigh the ones for doing X (where 'X' stands for any arbitrarily chosen action), then any true proposition of the form "One ought morally to do X" is one that might have been false.

In our characterization of both scientific and normative propositions as contingent is unobjectionable, then it is not merely false but also incoherent to suppose that such propositions can be derived from theistic propositions. For the latter, as we have seen, are viewed as necessary and necessity is logically hereditary. And if practical knowledge reduces itself to two basic components, namely to normative knowledge and to scientific knowledge, then it is incoherent to suppose that practical knowledge finds its ultimate basis in religious knowledge.

The anti-secularist Muslim fundamentalist might abandon the epistemological thesis under consideration and still adhere to his anti-secularist stance. He might advance a weaker thesis, namely that man, not because some essential features of his, but

because of some contingent defects, has been deprived, and permanently so, of the ability to know moral truth on his own[6]. In other words, man's reason as a matter of contingent fact, cannot on its own (i.e., unaided by divine guidance) perform a normative function. God could have created man without the alleged defects that impair his reason in a way that deprives it of any substantive-normative function, but chose not to do so for some reason of his own. And if man's rational capacities are so limited, then man cannot, without divine guidance, know moral truth.

There are several acute difficulties infesting this thesis. The first obvious one is that if what we have said toward the end of the previous section is correct, i.e., what we have said concerning morality being epistemologically prior to religion, then to suppose that man is permanently deprived of the ability to know moral truth is also to suppose that there is a permanent ban on his knowing religious truth. Thus, the present thesis involves us in a vicious circle: we cannot know moral truth unaided by divine guidance, but for us to be in a position to be aided by divine guidance is for us to be in a position to recognize that God is the source of this guidance. But we cannot be in the latter position unless we can know moral truth

unaided by divine guidance. There is no escape from this trap, if we insist on adhering to the present thesis, unless we deny that morality is epistemologically prior to religion. But one can hardly find any considerations supporting such a denial. As long as we do not deprive the concept of God of its normative content, we cannot – logically cannot – be in a position to know that that concept applies to a person unless we are in a position to attribute certain moral attributes to that person.

If the epistemological priority of morality to religion remains intact, then a second acute difficulty props up for the present thesis. This difficulty is that the present thesis involves its fundamentalist advocate in an incoherent position. The reason for this has to do with the fact that central to Muslim fundamentalism is the belief that *God intends for man to know God.* But if moral knowledge is necessary for man to know God, that *God intends for human reason to have substantive-normative function,* unless God did not intend for man to know God rationally but in some non-rational way. However, it is very doubtful that Muslim fundamentalists would accept the claim that there is a ban on the possibility of knowing God by reason(7), let alone the extremely dubious character of the concept of non-rational knowledge. Thus, it

appears to be incoherent to suppose both that human reason has been deprived of its normative function and that God intends for man to know God. One of these two suppositions must be abandoned, and it surely cannot be the latter. For knowing God in order to worship Him and devote one's self to Him is the highest value for the Muslim fundamentalist. And hence it is integral to the structure of his belief to suppose that God must have intended for man to know God and must have equipped him with whatever rational means necessary for that knowledge. But what this, in the light of our previous analysis, must entail is that God must have provided reason with a substantive-normative function and thus with the ability to know moral truth unaided by divine guidance.

Notes

1- Ali Ab'd Arraziq is, perhaps, the most important opponent of theocracy in Islam. See his: *al-Islam wa Usul al-Huk'm,* op.cit.

2- See, Rashid al-Ghannuchi and Hasan Atturabi, *al-Haraka al-Islamiyya wa Attahdith (The Islamic Movement and Modernization),* Khartoum, Maktabat Dar al-Fikr, 1980, p. 190, and also: Hasan al-Banna, *Muakkarat Adda'wa Wadda'ia,* p.283.

3- For a more detailed analysis of this core theistic belief, see Richard Swinburne, *The Coherence of Theism*, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1977.

4- For an extensive treatment of this position, see Adel Daher " God and Factual Necessity," in *Religious Studies* (1970), Adel Daher, " Addarura al-Ontologia " (Ontological Necessity) in *al-Baheth* (Beirut, 1981).

5- We have dealt in detail with the question of truth in morality in: Adel Daher, *al-Akhlaq wa al-Aql* (*Morality and Reason*), Dar ash-shuruq (forthcoming).

6- This position is really the predominant one among Muslim fundamentalists. See, Mohammed Ahmed Khalafalla, " Assahwa al-Islamiyya fi Mis'r," op.cit., pp. 45, 51, 62, 70, 72.

7- We shall assume here, for the sake of argument, that rational knowledge of God's existence, attributes and actions is theoretically possible

Some Remarks on Islamic Fundamentalism

Hamid Algar (*)

The current wave of religious revival and activism visible in every region of the Islamic world has given rise to a whole series of generalizing and infrequently hostile stereotypes. In fact, the present denunciations of " Islamic fundamentalism", allegedly the enemy of "modernity", are highly reminiscent of nineteenth century culminations against the "fanatical Mohammedans who were resisting the beneficial conquest by Christian Europe. The ideological coloring of the Western urge to dominate has changed, but the response to Islamic resistance has not; falsify, distort, and attack, while assuming a highly questionable stance of moral superiority.



Imam Khomeini gives Dr. Hamid Algar a condensed history of Iran's Islamic Revolution during an interview in Qum, December 29, 1979. Photo by Husayn Abbasi.

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A more dispassionate approach to understanding the contemporary Muslim situation must include the following elements:

1) The recognition of the great diversity prevailing across the Moslem world. This means that the current upsurge of religious activity among the Muslims of China, for example, must be appreciated in its specificity as a case quite different from the struggle of Hizbullah in Lebanon; that, therefore, the present phase of Islamic renewal is not simply reactive to some universal abstraction called "modernity"; and that Islamic history has its own internal dynamic, distinguishable from the conjuncture of the world as a whole, in which Muslims are at the same time necessarily embedded .

2) If by "fundamentalism" is meant a movement analogous with Christian fundamentalism, with its emphasis on the literal understanding of the Bible and its strange assortment of political and social aims, it must be stressed that Islamic fundamentalism is a creature in the mind of Western analysts, having no external existence. The interpretation of scripture is, by and large, not an issue in contemporary Muslim societies, and the Islamic movements far from espousing causes that are marginal to society derive much of their

appeal from the clear and radical formulation of problems and aspirations shared by society at large.

3) The notion that the Islamic movements as a whole seek a return to hopelessly superseded models of state and society is generally false. It is true that certain periods of Islamic history are regarded as expressing normative values, but there is- with the exception of certain cases - no attempt mechanically to imitate the detailed socio-political arrangements prevailing in the past. The ideal is rather to construct an "Islamic modernity" - an expression of Islam vigorous, comprehensive and confident enough to secure a genuine independence for the Muslim peoples.

4) The perception that Muslim/Islamic movements are in a defining and exceptional way given to"violence" is perhaps the most distorting element of all in the Western presentation of contemporary Islam. The path of armed struggle has been chosen by relatively few movements, and Muslims have been more commonly the recipients of violence than its perpetrators. Even the Islamic Republic of Iran, a regime synonymous with mindless and fanatical violence for the Western imagination, emerged from a movement that was based on the willingness to die as a martyr, not on the determination to kill.

Averroes and Enlightenment: the Road to Peace in the Middle East

Mona Abousenna (*)

The title of this article implies a hidden question, that is:

Why the presumption that Averroes and enlightenment would necessarily lead to peace in the Middle East?

The answer to this question requires, first, the definition of enlightenment and of peace.

Within the framework of enlightenment seen as a precondition for establishing peace, the philosophy of Averroes, briefly stated, revolves round one pivotal idea, namely, that of interpretation. This idea evolved as a result of the dichotomy between the public (or in today's terms, the masses) and the religious scholars, that is. the theologians, or, in Averroes' words, the "well grounded in science", who are in today's terms "the elite". According to Averroes, the public stops short at the level of the apparent meaning of the religious text, while the scholars, or the elite, surpass the apparent meaning to the inner meaning, and this

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inner meaning cannot be understood without interpretation. Interpretation, according to Averroes, is defined as "the allegorical interpretation which is the extension of the significance of an expression from real to metaphorical significance." The reason which calls for such an interpretation stated by him is as follows: "If the apparent meaning of Scripture conflicts with demonstrative conclusion it must be interpreted allegorically, i.e. metaphorically." However, Averroes argues, if the unanimity of all Muslims is precluded as a precondition for interpretation, then it is not possible to attain certainty, which is the end of unanimity. In order to clarify this statement, Averroes goes on to say that in matters of Law there is always an apparent and an inner meaning, and those who adhere to the apparent meaning, i.e. the public, know their way to God through hearing and tradition only and not through reasoning, and in doing so reach the conclusion that the believer should adhere to the apparent meaning only and avoid any kind of interpretation of the Quran. However, Averroes does not charge the public with heresy for not being able to understand the inner meaning of the Scripture because, in his view, the public cannot rise to the level of understanding demonstrative reasoning. But this should never give them the right to charge the others, i.e. the scholars, or

in Averroes' words "the well grounded in science", with blasphemy because they are concerned with understanding the inner meaning of the Quranic text. He writes:

"For the unlearned believers are those whose belief in Him is not based on demonstration; and if this belief which God has attributed to the scholars is peculiar to them, it must come through demonstration, and if it comes through demonstration it only occurs together with the science of allegorical interpretation." In this way, Averroes admits of the superiority of the scholars to the public in matters of understanding the religious Law. He, thus, distinguishes sharply between two cases: one in which the Law is regarded as superior to philosophy where the public are concerned, and the other case where philosophy is superior to the Law because it adopts interpretation in



Kant

understanding the inner meaning, and which is the sole concern of the scholars because they are well grounded in science.

Averroes'conclusion that philosophy is superior to religion is the very core of enlightenment which was heralded by Kant in Germany in 1784 in his article "An answer to a question: What is Enlightenment?" Kant declares at the outset of his article: "Sapere aude! " Have courage to exercise your own understanding!" that is the motto of enlightenment. Laziness and cowardice are the reasons why so great a portion of mankind ... remain under lifelong tutelage, and why it is so easy for others to set themselves up as their guardians."(30) By this portion of mankind, Kant means the public or the masses, for he goes on to say: "But be it noted that the public, which has first been brought under this yoke by their guardians, forces the guardians themselves to remain bound when it is later incited to do so by those among these guardians who are themselves incapable of all enlightenment - so harmful is it to implant prejudices, for in the end they take vengeance on their cultivators or on their descendants. Thus the public can only slowly attain enlightenment." (31) Kant then goes on to say: "But that the public should enlighten itself is more possible; indeed if only freedom is

granted, enlightenment is almost sure to follow." For this enlightenment, however, nothing is required but freedom, and freedom of the most harmless among its various definitions, freedom to make public use of one's reason (Vernunft) at every point." (31) Hence, Kant puts freedom to make public use of one's own reason as a necessary precondition for enlightenment of the public.

What is noteworthy in the above passages is that Kant insists time and again on the enlightenment of the public. However, this has not been achieved ever since Kant wrote his article, and the proof is the widespread predominance of mythical thinking among the masses in every part of the world, including Europe. The predominance of mythical thinking even received a pseudo-scientific justification by the Frankfurt School, in Adorno's and Horkheimer's book "Dialectics of the Enlightenment", where they state that the myth is an essential part of human reason. However, if this statement were universally correct, liberation from the myth, which was realised by the philosophers of the enlightenment, would not have been attained.

From the foregoing, we conclude that, by establishing the relationship between Averroes and enlightenment in their relationship with peace, such

relationship is organic. For peace cannot be realised except by the public and not by the elite because peace means the negation of war, and the negation of war is not possible without the negation of dogmatism since war means the negation of the other either by the use of force through killing after failure to eliminate that other by means of reason. Negation, either by murder or by reason, points to the fact that there is a different absolute truth possessed by the other and which should, therefore, be eliminated. The public, by virtue of being bound by dogmatism because it rejects interpretation, is, therefore, liable to raise war or, at least, support the call for war.

The question now is:

Can the public rise to the level of the elite if it is enlightened?

Averroes has tackled this question, and his opinion is that it is possible on condition that the public should sinduction to reasoning, that is, pass from the sensible to the rational. And when reason prevails among the public, enlightenment follows and prevails all over the society, and when this happens peace will also prevail because enlightenment is against dogmatism, and so is peace.

However, the obstacle facing such prevalence of reason is due to the elimination of the philosophy of Averroes from the culture of the Middle East, for he was charged with heresy, his books were burned, and he was confined to his village. Since then the philosophy of Averroes became marginal as Henri Corbin reports in his book **The History of Islamic Philosophy:** "Averroism has been marginal in the East in general and in Iran in particular." Alongside with this marginalisation of the philosophy of Averroes was the tendency to alienate it from the Western world, particularly from European enlightenment.

Unfortunately, this is true until today. For when we organised an international conference on Averroes and enlightenment in Cairo in 1994, most of the papers presented by Arab scholars revolved round the idea that the enlightenment of Averroes has nothing to do with the European enlightenment because it is strictly Islamic and belongs only to the Islamic civilisation and nothing else. By doing so the Arab scholars confirmed the dichotomy between two civilisations, the Islamic and the Western, a dichotomy that reaches the level of enmity. What is required now is the negation of enmity, and this is not possible without admitting, first, that we live in one civilisation despite the diversity of its cultural levels.

Notes

1- George Hourani (trans.) *Averroes: On the Harmony of Religion and Philosophy.* (London, Luzac & Co., 1976), p.50.

2-Emmanuel Kant, "Answer to a Question: What is Enlightenment?" in David Empson (ed.) *German Aesthetics and Literary Criticism.* (Cambridge University Press, 1984), pp.29-34.

3- Henri Corbin, Histoire *de la Philosophie Islamique.* (Paris, Gallimard, 1964), p.7.

The Fundamentalist Absolute and Secularization in the Middle East

Mourad Wahba (*)

The title of this paper necessitates, at the outset, the clarification of three terms: "absolute," "fundamentalist," and "secularization."

Kant was the first to introduce the concept of the absolute into the field of philosophy, at the beginning of his preface to the first edition of the *Critique of Pure Reason.* He says that reason has this peculiar destiny, within a part of its knowledge, of being forced to face questions it cannot avoid. These questions are imposed on reason by its very nature, but it is unable to give answers. These unanswerable questions are about the concept of absolute, whether you call it God or State. And the history of philosophy, according to Kant, is nothing but the story of this inability. However, Kant differentiates between two cases: to seek to grapple the absolute and to grapple the absolute. A possibility for grappling the absolute has always existed and will always exist, but to conceive that you have grasped the absolute, in an

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absolute way, is an illusion, for insofar as one grasps the absolute he or she limits it, and then it is no longer the all-comprehending reality.

This Kantian notion of the absolute flourished, in late nineteenth-century Germany, in a mystical form and emigrated to England with the specific purpose of counteracting the anti-religious developments of science. This religious absolute was Berkeleyian solipsism. But it was done to death in the early years of this century; people ceased to believe in the manufacture of the universe by the mind.

In recent times a new absolute has emerged, that is, the fundamentalist absolute. Thus we have to clarify what is meant by fundamentalism. It is described in the Oxford Dictionary as a religious movement that became active among various Protestant bodies in the United States after World War I, based on strict adherence to the literal inerrancy of Scripture.

The word came into use in the United States by 1920, and was probably coined by the editor of the New York *Watchman Examiner*, who in 1920 described "fundamentalists" as those "who mean to do battle royal for the fundamentals." The term "fundamentals" was familiar to *Watch man* readers

thanks to a series of free booklets that had been issued between 1909 and 1915, which dealt with the fundamentals of the faith, such as the reality of hell and the second advent of Christ; a series of attacks on the biblical criticism that treated the Bible chiefly as the record of a remarkable religious development; and criticism of scientific theories-especially Darwinism, in view of the threat that it seemed to present against the doctrine of creation.

From our understanding of the meaning of "the absolute" and "fundamentalism," we can define the meaning of the "fundamentalist absolute" as not being abstract and isolated from the historical process, but as being immanent, with the purpose of controlling the historical process by confining it to the past. In this sense, the fundamentalist absolute is a rupturous agent.

There remains 'secularization"; it is derived from the Latin word *Saeculum*, which means "the world in time and in history." Hence the definition to be adopted is that secularization is to think of the relative in a relative and not in an absolute way. In this sense secularization as a movement emerged in 1543, when a new mentality was born with Copernicus' book "De Revolutionibus orbium coelestium." Its pivotal idea is that humanity is not the centre of the universe.

Hence, fundamentalism differs from conservatism. Conservatism accepts the modern reduction of religion and accepts the modern arena in which the theological task is to be done, whereas fundamentalists are uncomfortable with the modern logos and are critical of it. Their main purposc is not to translate religion into the mental categories of modernity but to change these categories so that religion can be grasped. It stems from the belief that the whole world, not just some religious segments, should reflect its sacred source.

The underlying cause of the severe attack of fundamentalists on modernity is the emergence of a new trend in the west, that is, secular humanism. "A Secular Humanist Declaration," endorsed by fifty-eight prominent scholars, states: "Regrettably, we are today faced with a variety of anti-secularist trends: the reappearance of dogmatic authoritarian religious fundamentalist and a rapidly growing and uncompromising Moslem clericalism in the Middle East and Asia."

This new trend is based on the following principles:

1- Free inquiry: the right to differ not only in science and everyday life but also in politics, economics, ethics, and religion.

2- Separation of church and state: the foundation of an open democratic society where the clerical authorities are not permitted to legislate their own parochial views-whether moral, philosophical, or political.

3- The ideal of freedom: to defend freedom of conscience and belief not only from ecclesiastical control, but also from government control.

4- Ethics: based on critical intelligence, independent of revealed religion, formulated by critical thinking and in contradiction with absolute ethics.

5- Moral education: no particular sect can claim its values as its exclusive property; accordingly, moral education should be designed to encourage the capacity of free choice.

6- Religious skepticism: of the supernatural, doubt about traditional views of God and divinity, and denial of literal interpretation of sacred texts; universe is controlled by natural forces that can be understood by scientific research.

7- Reason: concern over the current attack by non-secularists on reason and science, and commitment to rational methods of inquiry and testing claims to truth.

8- Science and technology: belief in the scientific method for understanding the world; looking to the natural biological, social, and behavioural sciences for learning humankind's place within the world, and looking to astronomy and physics for learning the dimensions of the universe.

9- Evolution: defending the theory of evolution against the fundamentalists' attacks, which are a serious threat to academic freedom.

10- Education: the essential method of building humane, free, and democratic societies and of developing the capacity for critical thinking in both the individual and the community.

Consequently, one may conclude that there are two main trends in the second half of the twentieth century, that is, religious fundamentalism and secular humanism. In this paper I will tackle the religious fundamentalism in its Islamic form and expound the ideas of the most influential militant thinkers: Maulana Maududi, Sayyid Qutb, Ruhollah Khomeini, and Ali Shariati.

Islamic fundamentalism can be seen in motion throughout the Moslem world from North Africa to Southeast Asia, and it affects a total of six hundred million Moslems. It professes to offer a political,

economic, and social system that provides an alternative to both the capitalist and socialist systems, and that could restore or recreate the conditions that existed in the days of the Prophet Mohammed.

Maulana Maududi was born in South Central India. Many of his ancestors were leading members of Sufi orders, although he did not seem to have Sufi connections. His writings, mostly on Islamic subjects, attracted the attention of Iqbal, who invited him in 1937 to carry on his literary work on the premises of a charitable foundation at Pathankot in the Punjab. In 1941 he founded the Islamic group Jamaat-i-Islami. Failing to come to terms with the new state, he was jailed by the Pakistani authorities from 1948 to 1956. Maududi's Jamaat was an open supporter of the late General Zia al-Haq's military dictatorship, and colluded in the hanging of ex-Prime Minister Bhutto in 1979.

Maududi's mistake was that he considered secularization as being essentially a way of dealing with human matters through the relative and not through the absolute, that is, a refusal to absolutize the relative. And religious fundamentalism in general is nothing but an attempt to absolutize the relative. This error is also the result of considering secularization as being exclusively limited to Western civilization. This

has created, in turn, an artificial dichotomy by splitting civilization into Western and Islamic, whereas human civilization is one with diverse levels, the diversity being marked by civilization's process from mythical thinking (mythos) to rationality (logos) through the passage of secularization.

The major agent of transmitting Maududi's ideas was his disciple Hasan Ali Nadavi. The book he wrote in Arabic, *What Did the World Lose Due to the Decline of Islam?* expounded Maududi's modern Jahiliyya doctrine. When the author visited the Middle East in 1951 he was given a triumphant welcome from major thinkers. When he met Sayyid Qutb in Cairo, they found their ideas to be in close affinity, especially the concept of modern Jahiliyya (barbarism), which became the pivotal concept in Qutb's writings.

The negation of God's sovereignty denotes that human beings are under the domination of other humans rather than of God, and this means applying laws laid down by humans, whereas Islam observes the Law of

Sayed Qutb

God. Consequently, Qutb has conceived that the societies
of today are barbaric-including the Communist, the Jewish, the Christian, and even those who claim to be Islamic societies insofar as some of them explicitly adopt secularization and others declare that they adopt religion but exclude religion from the social system. From the concept of Jahiliyya Qutb concludes that Islam liberates people from being slaves to other human beings because it declares that God is the only giver of law. But this declaration is not mere speculation, it necessitates being incarnated into reality by force, or, strictly speaking, by the sword.

In this way, the fundamentalist absolute is antagonistic to secularization, and this antagonism is bloody on the ground that secularization is a negation of God's sovereignty in all areas of human life.

At last comes Khomeini, who incarnated the bloody fundamentalist absolute in Iran in 1979 through the establishment of the Islamic Republic. His perception of this Republic rotates round three issues(1) the need to subordinate political power to Islamic goals;(2) the duty of the religious scholars (the fuqaha) to bring about an Islamic state or "the governance of the Faqih";(3) a program of action for the establishment of the Islamic state.

These three issues rotate around the idea that the divine command has an absolute authority over all individuals and the government, the "fuqaha" themselves are real rulers, and it is the duty of the faqih to use the governmental institutions to execute the divine Law to establish the just Islamic order. The Law is actually the ruler.

Thus, the Islamic Republic differs from the secular republic in that the people do not assemble to pass laws or to make laws. Such power in Islam is in the hands of the Almighty. The Almighty is the sole legislative power, through the Koran and the Sunna. Consequently, the separation of religion from government and its relegation to a system of worship is completely alien to the spirit and the teachings of Islam.

What are the qualifications of an Islamic ruler who can undertake these responsibilities of government ? First, the leader must rule according to the divine Law and not by his own will. Second, this divine Law is conceived as being an interpretation of the just faqih , and the people have to obey in accordance with the Qoranic verse: "O believers obey God and obey the Messenger and those in authority among you." Up to this point one can see that Khomeini's concept of the fundamentalist absolute is

not theorized and elaborated. The one who did it was Ali Shariati. In his book *The Sociology of Islam* he tries to interpret history in religious terms. He says that the story of Cain and Abel is the story of history, the beginning of the war that still has not concluded. The weapon of each is religion. It is for this reason that the war of religion against religion has been a constant in human history. On the one hand is the religion of Shirk, of assigning partners to God, a religion that furnishes the justification of Shirk in society and class discrimination. On the other hand is the religion of Tawheed , of the oneness of God that furnishes the justification for the unity of all classes and races. But this does not mean that Shariati is for communism. He is against both capitalism and communism because Islam excels both.

Now the question is, What are the fundamentals of the Tawheed, that is, Islam?

They are three: preservation (Taqiye), submission to the Imam, and ability to offer one's life as a testimony. The most important is the third principle because it is this principle that pushes the Moslem into war without hesitation. In this respect it is not death that chooses the martyr, but the martyr who chooses death, consciously and according to his or her own will. It is not a matter of tragedy but of an

ideal because testimony by blood is the supreme degree of perfection. This means that the real Moslem is the militant martyr.

To conclude, Islamic fundamentalism confuses the absolute with the relative, the eternal truth with a temporal expression of the truth. Thus the theological truth of yesterday is defended as an unchangeable message against the theological truth of today and tomorrow. Islamic fundamentalism fails to make contact with the present situation, not because it speaks from beyond every situation but because it speaks from a situation of the past. It elevates something finite and transitory to infinite and eternal validity. In this context, fundamentalism paves the way for what I call "absolute struggle."